

October 7, 2014

A special meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held on Tuesday, October 7, 2014 at 12:00 p.m. in the office of the Board at 600 Market Street, Camden, New Jersey, with James H. Rhodes, Chair, presiding. The following members were present:

Susan Michielli, Vice Chair; Dr. Leonard Krivy, PhD., Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera; Ginny Betteridge

Also present were: Shawn Sheekey, Director; Christine Hentisz, Deputy Director; Martin F. McKernan Jr., Esquire, Board Counsel; Sharon Faber, Esquire; MaryEllen Sittner, Personnel Officer; Mary Ann Pagano, Fiscal Officer; Greg Smith, Sr. Management Assistant; Joan Quinton, Confidential Aide to Freeholder Carmen G. Rodriguez; Sharon Hall, Administrative Clerk

Public Attendance: George Jackson, President, CWA-Local 1084; Gerald Baker, Vice President, CWA-Local 1084; Bruce Conover, President, WSO; Toni Bobiak, Vice President, WSO; additional officers of the CWA and WSO bargaining units and a number of members from both CWA-Local 1084 and WSO.

At 12:00 P.M., a quorum being present, Mr. Rhodes called the meeting to order and announced that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the Courier Post Newspaper and the Philadelphia Inquirer were notified of the Board Meeting; notice of the agenda was posted in a prominent place at 600 Market Street and the County Clerk was notified.

Mr. Rhodes requested approval of the following items:

- Minutes of the September Board Meeting.
- The listed expenditures from both Clearing and Administration Accounts.
- The payment of salaries and traveling expenses for October.
- Requisition from the County Treasurer for administration expenses for November.
- To move funds, to be requisitioned from the State and County Treasurers less monies on hand for assistance payments for the month of November.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

Dr. Krivy moved to approve. Ms. Michielli seconded the motion, and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

**OPEN SESSION  
Public Participation**

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to open the meeting for public participation. Ms. Michielli moved to open the Public Participation portion of the Open Session, seconded by Ms. Betteridge.

Mr. George Jackson, President, CWA-Local 1084 addressed the Board on behalf of the CWA-Local 1084 membership and himself as an employee of the BOSS. Mr. Jackson stated that he would request that the Board pull Resolution 216-2014 and Resolution 217-2014 pertaining to changes for health care coverage from the agenda as there was no previous knowledge, discussion or notification regarding plans to terminate health coverage with the New Jersey State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP) nor any information provided to the Unions or the staff regarding the proposed new health care plan. Mr. Jackson stated that hundreds of employees have been asking for information regarding the changes and the Unions had none to provide.

Mr. Jackson stated that according to contract, any health insurance plan provided to eligible employees of the BOSS must "be provided at the level provided by the New Jersey State Health Benefits Plan". Mr. Rhodes stated that the parties concerned are aware that the criteria for any new plan must be the same as what is provided under the SHBP.

Mr. Rhodes stated that both Resolutions would be pulled from the agenda as per yesterday's discussion with Mr. Jackson and Mr. Conover. Mr. Rhodes stated that the Resolutions were discussed at the September 17, 2014 Board meeting, but they will not be acted upon today. Mr. Rhodes stated that the Board is doing everything possible to lower health care costs for everyone and will continue to explore alternative health care coverage as the SHBP is becoming unaffordable. Mr. Rhodes stated that a county wide claims analysis had been performed which indicated that moving from the SHBP will provide significant savings for the BOSS and its employees in terms of the employees increasing premium cost sharing, which in January 2015 will increase to 50%. Mr. Rhodes stated that the agency was looking to avoid two open enrollments, one for the SHBP and one for the proposed new plan, however, information for the SHBP open enrollment has been emailed to the staff.

Mr. Jackson reminded the members of the Board of the change to a self-insured fund debacle that occurred years ago when the BOSS moved from the SHBP. Mr. Rhodes stated that the proposed new plan is not a self-funded plan and that the agency would be joining a group that has thirty thousand members, has been around forever, and is running great surpluses. The agency will have professional but local management of the health plans. When issues arise, instead of having to deal with the State, there will be local representation and service should improve when help is needed. Many of the current members in the new plan are police departments and former governmental members of the SHBP. There is re-insurance for when claims go over a certain threshold. The agency would be protected as the re-issuance would pay those claims. Mr. Rhodes stated that he and the members of the Board are satisfied and confident that the proposed new plan is a good plan.

Mr. Rhodes stated the agency will commit to having the new plan representatives come in to hold meetings and give open enrollment presentations for all staff to learn about the new plans.

Mr. Conover, President of WSO, requested to reiterate the need for open communications and transparency so the membership can make informative decisions regarding their health care coverage. Mr. Conover also stated that the Unions would like to be able to provide input and feedback as there is the need for and concerns with the continuity and scope of health care coverage.

**OPEN SESSION  
Public Participation**

After some additional discussion and questions from a few of the attending bargaining unit members, Mr. Rhodes stated he would set up a meeting next week with Mr. Jackson and Mr. Conover to further discuss the matter. Mr. Rhodes also mentioned that the prescription plan will not be changing and that the agency always has the option to return to the SHBP should satisfaction be lacking with any alternative health care plan chosen.

There were no further public requests to address the Board and, therefore, Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to close the Public Participation portion of the Open Session. Ms. Michielli motioned to close the Public Portion. Ms. Betteridge seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

The Open Session of the meeting continued.

**Resolution 216-2014 and Resolution 217-2014**

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to table Resolution 216-2014 - Terminating Participation in State Health Benefits Program and Resolution 217-2014 - To Join Southern New Jersey Regional Employee Benefits Fund, Accept and Approve the Fund's Bylaws, Execute an Application for Membership in the Fund, and Execute an Indemnity and Trust Agreement and Such Other Documents Signifying Membership in the Fund.

Ms. Michielli moved the motion to table both Resolutions. Dr. Krivy seconded the motion and there being no other discussion on the motion a vote was taken and unanimously adopted.

**UPDATE STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES ..... Shawn Sheekey, Director**

Mr. Sheekey stated that all Board members would find a synopsis of informational transmittals, procedural bulletins, general assistance procedural bulletins and Division of Family Development instructions in their packet. If there were any questions on any of the material, Mr. Sheekey stated that he or his staff would be happy to comment on them.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve the Director's Update on State and Federal Policies.

Ms. Betteridge moved to approve. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT ..... Shawn Sheekey, Director**

Mr. Sheekey provided the Board with an update on the Statewide FNS (Food and Nutrition Service) SNAP timeliness challenge. Mr. Sheekey stated that October 1, 2014 began the very intensive review of food stamp timeliness by FNS and DFD. At last Friday's DFD meeting it was reported that over the last few weeks the State is trending up in timeliness. The number for 30 day applications was in the range of 90% and the 7day expedited was at 80%. The September number came to approximately 78% for 30 day applications and 89% for 7 day expedited. Most counties are doing a better job. Camden County was reported as having one late case last week and today the agency is at five. The agency will continue to monitor this as it is the number one issue that the agency has to be mindful of given the money that is at stake. The processes and reporting requirements that have been put in place are letting the agency see how it is doing on a daily basis and enabling corrective action to be taken as needed to meet timeliness.

Mr. Sheekey stated that DFD contracted with the Rutgers School of Social Work to visit all twenty-one counties to assist with the supervisory management level in terms of leadership, employee engagement and the culture of the organization. The directors did not get in depth details, but a pilot was started in Ocean County and there was very positive feedback and results.

**OPEN SESSION  
Public Participation**

Mr. Sheekey stated that the State did hear the counties concerns regarding getting some relief from the multiple projects being placed on them. Two items that the State will not be pursuing at this time are the possible Medicaid pilot, that Mr. Sheekey mentioned about six months ago, scheduled to begin early next year, and also an Emergency Assistance Pilot which would have involved every person applying for emergency assistance being sent through Trenton for review of the paperwork to determine if the agency was taking the correct action.

Mr. Sheekey stated that he and Christine Hentisz have been discussing SNAP communication strategies to get the message out that although food stamp timeliness is the main focus at the time, there are many important programs throughout the agency that still need to be implemented, such as getting Medicaid applications processed. Such strategies may include continuance of the Director’s Message on a more frequent basis and more departmental meetings. Although much time is spent on dealing with issues and fixing problems, management needs to communicate better with people, which includes getting people to understand the importance of the food stamp timeliness measurement and what it could potentially mean to administrative funding. Mr. Sheekey commented that DFD sees a lot of counties whose staff is not really aware enough of the importance of the timeliness initiative for which focus will continue through next September.

Mr. Sheekey mentioned that he will be meeting with Mr. Jackson and Mr. Baker tomorrow to discuss items of mutual interest.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve the Director’s Report.

Ms. Betteridge moved to approve. Dr. Krivy seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

**FISCAL REPORT ..... Mary Ann Pagano, Fiscal Officer**

Ms. Pagano stated that each Board member has received in his or her packet copies of the Fiscal Reports for the 9-month period ended September 30, 2014. Ms. Pagano stated that expenditures are in line with the prorated budget and that receipts exceeded expenditures by \$250,000. Ms. Pagano asked if there were any questions, if so, she would be happy to address them.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to accept the Fiscal Reports as presented.

Ms. Michielli moved to approve. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

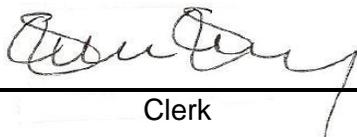
**OLD BUSINESS PUBLIC SESSION**

There was none.

**NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC SESSION**

Mr. Rhodes discussed the continuance of looking into health benefits cost savings.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to close the Open Session and move to the Closed Executive Session to discuss personnel and legal matters. Ms. Michielli moved to discuss such matters in closed session. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion, and there being no discussion on the motion a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

  
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Clerk